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important for prospective spouses? Among Hutu and Tutsi both patrilineages looked for the right connexion. Has the man's (or girl's) inzu a good reputation? Is it well considered at the king's court? Are they rich? Is it strategic, in present circumstances, to be allied to them? What are the relations between their cattle-lord and ours? Individual qualities considered as socially important were for the prospective wife of a Tutsi that she should be expert at keeping a house very clean, at basket work, and at commanding servants. The Hutu wanted a hard-working wife able to help them in the fields. The Twa appreciated, as we may expect, a skilled potter. The most important qualities of the culturally defined ideal husband was his ability to support economically his wife and their children. That meant for a Tutsi that he should be rich in cattle and clever in political intrigues; for a Hutu that he should be a good labourer and a client appreciated by his lord, and for a Twa that he should be a good craftsman or hunter or a buffoon, liked by his Tutsi protectors. These qualities mentioned by our informants are those which made spouses good partners in the co-operative economic unit of the family. In the mind of Ruanda that aspect of the family was clearly emphasized. Beauty and sex-appeal were also highly appreciated, however, particularly by Tutsi.

The normal marriage age for boys was around twenty-five for Tutsi, seventeen to eighteen for Hutu, and fifteen for Twa. For girls, when 'breasts were fully developed and beginning to fall down' I was told. This gives a rather large range of age. A girl could be married before puberty but she remained with her parents till her first menstruation.

According to informants, virginity was appreciated more than both beauty and ability to co-operate in economic pursuits. This was rationalized in terms of virginity being a guarantee of fertility and of stability in the family. Among the Hutu a small gift was sent to the girl's parents by the husband when the girl was found to be virgin.

The prospective spouse was not chosen by his or her future partner. The boy could express only to his paternal uncle or aunt nothing more than a wish to get married. The father was told of his son's desire and then looked for a suitable girl. When she was found, the inzu council met and the advisability of a connexion with the girl's inzu was discussed. When an agreement was reached on the choice, the boy's father asked for an appointment with the

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For husband and wife, sex was not only that pleasurable activity in which tensions are released, but it was also linked with feelings of affection and sympathy. Moreover, as some cases of prohibition and obligation make it clear, it was a means of participating in collective feelings and of relating oneself to natural processes and rhythms.

For men, marriage was not the only socially approved means of obtaining sexual gratification. Before marriage young Tutsi were often given Hutu temporary concubines, wives or daughters of their father's clients. Moreover, they, as well as young Hutu, had privileged partners: married cross-cousins, brothers', and parallel cousins' wives. If they had affairs with unrelated women or even related or unrelated girls, the blame and the risk were for the latter more than for themselves. But as these affairs were occasional and had to be kept secret, marriage brought to men stability, continuity, and quietness in their sexual life. Homosexuality was widespread among Tutsi and Hutu young men. For girls, any heterosexual activity before marriage was strictly prohibited and severely sanctioned. After marriage, their sexual needs could be satisfied not only with their husbands but with their privileged partners.

Cohabitation was an obligation for each spouse. Refusal over a certain time—one, two or three weeks according to different informants—was a cause of temporary separation or even of divorce (of course this does not refer to a refusal based on culturally accepted reasons such as illness or menstruation). Frequency of intercourse is said to have been up to three times a day for Tutsi when they were newly married, then once a day for young people, and about once every other day later on. Hutu accounts suggest that the average frequency was not as high in their group (once a day for newly married, every other day for young people, and twice or once a week later on). The difference was attributed to the more leisurely life of Tutsi. 'They were not tired by work in the fields.' Women were said to be more eager than men but I was told by some informants that men thought this 'because they never refused intercourse'. Women, however, had to behave in a restrained way and to leave the initiative to men. It was very improper for a wife to manifest pleasure or to be other than purely passive during love-play and intercourse. Both partners sat or lay on their sides. Coitus with the woman lying on her back

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under the man was not usually practised. In the polygynous family the husband had to spend two nights with each wife *seriatim* and to have at least one intercourse.

The Ruanda thought that when the sex activity of an individual had begun, he could legitimately expect an opportunity to enjoy intercourse as frequently as was socially thought normal. Some parents were said to be severe towards sexual play among children. When the latter indulged in imitation of adult relations, in masturbation, and other manipulations, they were beaten and flogged. Others were more permissive.[8] Homosexuality was common among young Tutsi when being trained at court, and was almost exclusively ascribed to the lack of heterosexual contacts.

Later in life, sex needs were regarded as requiring satisfaction just as any other natural need. If the husband or wife was not available, it was socially permitted to have another partner (among the privileged ones) even if the absent spouse resented it. The sexual needs of a woman were thought to be more urgent when she was pregnant; intercourse once a week was regarded as a minimum. If her husband was absent, therefore, cohabitation with one of his brothers or parallel cousins was viewed almost with favour. When a husband had been away for a very long time, and if it was not known even if he was still living, though his wife could not obtain a divorce she could cohabit and have children with one of her privileged partners, preferably belonging to her husband's patrilineage. A wife never accompanied her husband on his travels to the court or elsewhere. In such cases the Tutsi took with them a concubine, the daughter of a client for instance.

At the court of the king or of important chiefs, there were a few Tutsi women who were openly servants of the chief or the king (*abaja*). In fact they were courtesans, either the daughters of Tutsi clients of the chief or king, who had been invited by the chief or king to come to the court as servants because of their beauty, or divorced women. They received costly presents and were often well-off, having their own herds of cattle. These presents appear to have been rewards not only for sexual favours but also, and perhaps mainly, for some inside information so useful in that world of intrigue.

The preceding paragraphs should not be understood as implying that the Ruanda emphasized exclusively the physical and

[8] Cf. Vincent, 1934, pp. 167-71.

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physiological aspect of sexuality. They do not seem to have thought of sexual relations as the fulfilment of a romantic love between two individuals meant to mate with each other and nobody else. The way spouses were chosen by the two patrilineages prevented any such ideas, for the choosing of spouses rested on the assumption that any boy and any girl of the right age and reasonably attractive could be good partners in marriage and sexuality. But feelings of sympathy and affection developed later as a result of their life together rather than as its basis. According to our informants, love, in the sense of attractiveness based on individual characteristics, was greater in non-marital relations. 'One slept with a certain woman to make her happy because one liked her,' I was told.

Various prohibitions and obligations indicate how sexuality in marriage was related to events concerning the community and the patrilineage. During the mourning period for the husband's father and mother, which lasted one, two or three months according to the region, intercourse was prohibited for both husband and wife. It was also prohibited for one moon after the death of the wife's child, and for two or three moons for the surviving spouse when one of the spouses died. The meaning of this taboo was not only that one had to refrain from enjoying oneself when one should have been in sorrow. It meant also a certain symbolic participation in death or in the diminution of life affecting the patrilineage. This is, I think, what informants have in mind when they say in this connexion that sex is a sacred activity. This interpretation seems to be supported by what happened when a king died. Not only had all Ruanda to be continent for a certain period (some informants said two moons, others one year), but the bulls were separated from cows and rams from sheep. The king (*mwami*) was identified with Ruanda. If he was strong, Ruanda was strong, if he was getting old and weak, he had to commit suicide because he endangered the country's life. In that context, if animals were prevented from mating it was to express symbolically the idea of the death of the community rather than, it seems, to deny them pleasure.

On the other hand, intercourse was obligatory when events fortunate for the patrilineage or the community at large occurred. For instance when a new hut was occupied, when six days had passed after the birth of a child, when the first teeth of the baby

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quently, in domestic battles, the husband can vanquish the wife. He must, nevertheless, be on his guard if she becomes very angry. For, even though men (as superiors) are able to control their anger, women (as inferiors) are likely to lose their heads. She can take a knife and kill her husband, says the Hutu; she will poison her husband, says the Tutsi. Furthermore, women are regarded as less courageous than men in the presence of enemies; they are more easily discouraged when there is misfortune; they cry more easily; and they do not conceal their emotions. No attention whatever is paid to any evidence which might contradict the stereotype.

A man who is jealous of his wife's lovers is considered an imbecile. Particularly among the rich, a wife can show her fidelity to her husband's interests by going to bed with his superiors, if by this means she can calm the superior or obtain valuable information from him. Out of delicacy, the husband visits his neighbours when his superior comes to call. On the other hand, most family troubles are explained by the presumably unlimited capacity of women for jealousy. At marriage, a Rundikazi is supposed to be a virgin. Once she is married, it is said, she has great and constant need for sexual satisfaction. A man is privileged, if not obliged, to sleep with all his wives, the wives of his brothers and of his parallel cousins, his female cross-cousins, the wives of his male cross-cousins, the sisters and female cross- and parallel-cousins of his wife, and various other ladies. The kinship system is obviously a highly classificatory one. Nevertheless, men must discharge their sexual obligations in secret. If a husband finds his wife in bed with another man, he is morally obligated to beat his wife and to quarrel a little with the man. Far more serious, if a woman sees her husband entering the house of his sister-in-law, there will be no more peace for him at home. A woman, it was explained, is jealous of those with whom her husband sleeps, because the others will perhaps get presents out of him that she wants for herself, or perhaps one of the other women will speak against her to persuade her husband to divorce her. If there appear to be contradictions here, it is probably due to the lack of a truly Rundi perspective.

It is not for nothing, say the Rundi, that the wives of a polygamist are called *abakeba*, rivals.[11] Each woman watches every other wife—the presents she has received from her husband, the size of the property she has been given to cultivate and as an inheritance for her sons, the cows given for her household, the number of children she has, the number of nights the husband spends with her. To calumniate one's *abakeba*, to poison them, to quarrel with them, to give the husband *inzaratsi*—the potion that

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mother how to farm and to carry burdens on their heads. At 12, boys and girls should be able to work well and independently. If not, they are beaten or deprived of their dinner to encourage them to learn. There is, nevertheless, time to play with other children, the boys with other boys, the girls with other girls.

Moral taboos have no significance before adolescence. Children may eat anything at all, without penalty. A young girl may milk a cow: she is not yet a woman, say the Rundi, she is still like her brother. Brothers and sisters sleep together in the same bed and are covered by the same mat. If sometimes there are sexual experiments, these are not called incest. They are only children, they are not responsible, they cannot sin. At puberty, a young girl is removed from the common bedroom of the children. Boys seem to mature much later than girls. Moreover, the question of the dowry enters to delay their marriage. It is said that girls want to be married very early. By the time they have reached puberty, they have already begun to play with other young girls, each helping the other to develop the private parts to a maximum size in anticipation of the pleasures of the marriage bed. A mother warns her daughter that she must absolutely remain a virgin until her marriage, or, at least, that she does not dare to become pregnant if she has not yet been asked for and paid for. In the past, an unmarried mother-to-be would have been killed and her father's property confiscated. Today, there are illegitimate children, and nobody knows quite what to do with them. (One way in which a disgruntled wife can revenge herself upon her husband is by allowing a grown daughter to become pregnant before she is paid for.) At all events, it is up to the mother of a nubile daughter to watch her carefully.

Very strong taboos forbid all contact between a father and his daughter after she has been weaned, except for mutual greetings and for several minor services which a daughter performs for her father.[12] It is customary for girls to wear only a skirt while working, and in the past, a young girl might wear nothing at all or only a leopard skin around her hips. A father must avert his eyes if a daughter is working with her bosom exposed. If a father wishes some information about his daughter, or if he wishes to say something to her, he must ask his wife to speak to their daughter. If a young girl is to be punished, it is the mother who will beat her, never the father. The same taboos apply to the father's brothers. All are called *data*, father. Fathers never enter the house in which a married daughter lives with her husband. The explanation offered for these strong taboos to separate father from mature